

Message Text

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SUBJ: TIMOR-MORE PROBLEMS FOR GOP

REF: LISBON 2954 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: ON HEELS OF GOP SUCCESS IN ARRANGING DECOLONIZATION TALKS BETWEEN GOP AND TIMORESE PARTIES, PARTISAN DIVISION HAS BROKEN OUT, DILI SCHOOLS ARE SHUT DOWN, AND DECOLONIZATION APPEARS ALL THE MORE DIFFICULT IN PORTUGAL'S LAST OVERSEAS POSSESSION. END SUMMARY.

1. BACKGROUND: WITH NOVEMBER 1975 ANGOLAN INDEPENDENCE BRINGING A CLOSE TO PORTUGUESE COLONIAL AFRICA, TIMOR
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REMAINS THE LAST VESTIGE OF THE ONCE WORLDWIDE PORTUGUESE

EMPIRE. SOON AFTER THE CAETANO REGIME WAS OVERTHROWN IN APRIL, 1974, THREE POLITICAL MOVEMENTS SURFACED IN THE TINY ASIAN POSESSION: APODETI FAVORING INTEGRATION WITH INDONESIA, FRETILIN ADVOCATING INDEPENDENCE, AND UDT EMBRACING A FEDERALIST ARRANGEMENTS WITH LISBON. UNDER THE ALLEGED THREAT OF AN INDONESIAN INVASION AND WHILE LISBON RAPIDLY DECOLONIZED IN AFRICA, FRETILIN AND UDT ENTERED INTO A PRO-INDEPENDENCE COALITION IN JANUARY 1975. IN MAY 1975, LISBON ANNOUNCED SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS BY SPECIAL TROUBLESHOOTER VITOR ALVES AND GOP AUTHORITIES IN DILI TO ARRANGE JUNE MACAU SUMMIT BETWEEN GOP, APODETI, AND UDT/FRETILIN. ALVES' SUCCESS WAS SHORTLIVED; TIMORESE SITUATION HAS TAKEN TURN FOR WORSE.

2. UDT/FRETILIN SPLIT; TURMOIL IN DILI SCHOOLS: MAY 27 UDT COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCED END OF COALITION WITH FRETILIN. UDT CHARGES AGAINST FRETILIN INCLUDED BAD FAITH IN ADHERING TO COALITION AGREEMENT, ESCALATION FROM IDEOLOGICAL TO PHYSICAL AGGRESSION, AND PROMOTION OF A CLIMATE OF INSECURITY AMONG THE TIMORESE POPULATION. UDT/FRETILIN FALLOUT UNDOUBTEDLY RELATED TO SECONDARY SCHOOL TURMOIL IN WHICH PRO-FRETILIN STUDENT ORGANIZATION CALLED UNETIN CLASHED WITH PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES AND LESVALT, RIVAL STUDENT ORGANIZATION WHICH AVORS UDT AND ALLEGEDLY HAS BACKING OF CHURCH. ISSUE AT STUDENT LEVEL AROSE FROM UNETIN DEMAND FOR EXCLUSIVE REPRESENTATION OF ALL STUDENTS. TURMOIL INCLUDE STUDENTS BRANDISHING WHIPS, REMOVAL OF TEACHERS, STUDENT STRIKE, DEMONSTRATIONS, AND CHARGES THAT UNETIN IS MAOIST. GOP GOVERNOR LEMOS PIRES CLOSED DILI SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON MAY 27.

3. GOP FAILS TO RESTORE COALITION: ON JUNE 3, TIMOR DECOLONIZATION COMMISSION (TDC) COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNCED RESULTS OF SEPARATE TALKS WITH FRETILIN AND UDT. COMMUNIQUE SAID FRETILIN REJECTED UDT COALITION AGREEMENT IT PREVIOUSLY ACCEPTED IN JANUARY. IMPASSE HAS HALTED TDC CONTACTS WITH LOCAL MOVEMENTS UNTIL TDC RECEIVES NEW INSTRUCTIONS FROM LISBON. COMMUNIQUE ALSO STATED TDC HAD FRANK EXCHANGE WITH UDT ON GENERAL POLITICAL VIEWS AND COALITION RUPTURE. COMMUNIQUE ENDED WITH REAFFIRMATION OF EFFORTS TO CONTINUE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECOLONIZATION PROCESS, CALL FOR UNITY, AND EXPRESS DESIRE THAT TIMORESE FIND THEIR OWN POLITICAL PATH AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

4. PORTUGUESE MEDIA COVERAGE ON TIMOR: ALMOST ALL OF LISBON PRESS CLEARLY FAVORS FRETILIN. FOR EXAMPLY, MAY 27 UDT COMMUNIQUE NEVER SAW PRINT. BULK OF TIMOR REPORTING CONSISTS OF LISBON'S PRO-FRETILIN HOUSE OF TIMOR COMMUNIQUE,

STATEMENTS BY VISITING FRETILIN VICE PRESIDENT NICOLAU DOS REIS LOBATO, AND OCCASIONAL REPORTS ON CULTURAL, GEOGRAPHICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS. ENTIRE JUNE 3 DIARIO DE NOTICIAS INTERVIEW WITH TDC MEMBER MAJOR FRANCISCO FERNANDES DA MOTA WAS DEFENSIVE IN TONE AND CONSISTED OF NUMEROUS REBUTTALS OF LOBATO STATEMENTS.

5. COMMENT: BALL IS IN LISBON COURT AS TDC AWAITS NEW INSTRUCTIONS. MACAU SUMMIT WILL PROBABLY TAKE PLACE BUT UNDER MORE COMPLEX CONDITIONS FOR GOP. CALL FOR QUICK SOLUTION IN TDC COMMUNIQUE PROBABLY REPRESENTS PRESSURE IN GOP TO CAST LOOSE LAST SEGMENT OF PORTUGUESE EMPIRE.
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